

302 it, *tebawwalat*. The camel's urine destroys the lice embryos,
 515 refreshes the scalp, prevents itching, and gives the hair a
 825 peculiar gloss. Then the girl takes a wooden comb with rough
 302 teeth on both sides, combs her hair, *temaššatāt*, and braids
 it, *telemm rāsah*. The hair above the forehead as a rule she
 does not plait, but merely trims, so that it hangs down freely,
kussa, but she plaits the rest of the hair on the top of the
 head and above the ears into braids, *dawājeb*, and makes two
 small pigtaails, 'akša', of the back hair. Each braid ends in a
 small knot tied with a small ribbon. The braids are neither
 wound around the head, nor rolled. Long unplaited hair is
 called *ša'ar*, plaited hair being known as *žedājel* (or *krūn*).
 Trimmed hair above the forehead is *kussa*, *nāsije*, or *gabhe*.
 Tresses: *židle*, 'erf, or *krūn*. Short hair: *hawāf*, *berčem*, *ka-*
kūle, *rās*, or *šūše*.

832 Long hair and long tresses are the chief ornament of a
 302 woman, and every youth longs to marry a girl or woman thus
 adorned. The older men do not care for the long hair and
 advise the youth: "Amuse thyself with a short haired one, if
 thou canst not get a girl whose tresses are ornamented with
 coins; *telahha' bumm šūše ilja mā tjik al-manķūše*."

304 Nearly all women are tattooed on the lips, cheeks, nose,
 forehead, breast, around the breasts, and on the belly. This
 is always done by a gipsy woman, *nūrijje*. First the gipsy
 pricks certain patterns into the skin, then dips the needle in
 indigo and transmits this dye into the holes. After this oper-
 ation she binds the tattooed part of the body, and not until
 the seventh day is past are the bandages removed, when the
 spots are washed. The pictures thus produced, *daķķ al-wšām*,
 generally circles and triangles, are supposed to enhance the
 maiden's beauty, *min šān zerāfa*.

291 Both men and women wear on their bare bodies a belt
 plaited from five thin strips of gazelle leather, the men's
 being called *haķw* (or *sebtē*), and the women's *barim* (or *ru-*
sejni). Persons not wearing this belt are named *ma'w* or
aslat. The Rwala buy the *haķw* from the Šlejb, usually for
 a quarter of a *mešīdijje* (22½ cents).

MEN'S CLOTHES

The main dress of the men consists of a white shirt (*towb*)
 reaching to the heels, with broad sleeves ending at the wrist

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

191

8. The bridge of her nose glistens like the blade of an
Indian sword;
To pearls and corals her teeth I compare.
9. Oh, her spittle! Like viper-wine it is used,
For it heals one bitten by a snake as soon as he drinks
of it.
10. Oh, the neck of my darling! like that of a gazelle
Or the white antelope which men hunt on horseback.
11. Her breasts are adorned by tattooing with gems pre-
cious and costly.
Which neither the wealth of Persia nor of Syria could buy.
12. Her breasts, they are apples, — alas, for my loss that
has bereft me of reason! —
A china cup set on a tray.
13. Her arms glisten as a silver pot,
And her little finger is a burnished gold stick.
14. How slender is she! I think not she has yet born children.
To a sprig of wild cherry I liken her, as it sways in
the air.
15. O ye who hear this voice, have mercy on me!
O Moslems! will you not pity one dead?
16. Bring here my mistress, set her before me
And on my breast lay her when I die.
17. Oh, may he who reviles me have no kin,
Or become a captive seized by unbelievers.

831^x
539^x

The poet was Nimr eben 'Adwân; the reciter, Ġwâd al-'Âni. The poet sits on a steep stone pile, laments, and describes the beauty of his dead sweetheart, with whom he wishes to be buried. Verse 1. *Ḥorr šemâli* is a camel recognized as pure-blooded by the tribes camping in al-Belka' and the Hawrân districts, whereas the tribes living farther east and south deny this, declaring it is by no means certain that both of its parents were thoroughbreds. 3. *Riġm* is an artificial pile of stones. Such piles are usually found on the most prominent hills and serve as shelters for the watchers or spies, who, lying down at their post, may observe the whole country around. *Radîr* is a hollow in a channel where the rain water remains even when the stream had dried up. 5. *Ġalab* is a feather from the hips of an ostrich, used as an ornament or bouquet. 9. *Dâbb* is any poisonous snake of some length; short ones are known as *efâ'i*. 11. The breasts are often covered with tattooed patterns in imitation of various jewels.

[232]

[712]

[301]

[304] •

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

197

12. She is clear white, pink, and bordered with red,
And her glory exceeds the beauty of Joseph.
13. No untruth I speak, nor is it a fable,
For, after all, I am no maker of stories.
14. He who will revile me must have less wisdom than a
bull or she-ass,
For easier it is to persuade a bull which when bidden turns.
15. By Allâh! I shall not find her even among the houris.
Therefore, to describe what has passed away is of no help.
16. By Allâh himself! with her death my life is destroyed;
Hence wise is moderation for the sake of Allâh, who
knows all secrets.

831⁺
539^x

This poem, composed by the poet Nimr eben 'Adwân, was recited to me by Trâd eben Saṭṭâm, who learned it from his mother, who hailed from the Sirhân tribe.

Verse 1. *Ḳalam* is a pen cut from stout reed. *Zejzaf* or *nâ'em* means "smooth, soft." 2. *Ḳalb* is a she-camel, old, toothless, and therefore very emaciated. *Tâwi* denotes such a beast which can kneel but on account of its weakness cannot rise again. Sometimes a feeble she-camel of this kind is left behind on the camping ground; the poor beast tries to get up, but every time sinks down again uttering bitter moans. Her deep sighs are heard far around. She longs for her companions whom she is not to see again, and is afraid of the wolves.

4. *Adâra* is the name for all young women, whether virgins or not. A virgin is called *bikr*; a female who has lost her virginity, *mâhûda*. *Singâr* is a mountain ridge southwest of Mosul.

5. The daughters of the *Ṣlejb* excel by their perfect shapes. *Ṣihâra* is the name given by the *Ṣlejb* to their pure-blooded asses, which they often cross with the wild asses. The *Ṣlejb* women are often elaborately tattooed on their cheeks. 6. *Hawâdoḡ*, quiverings, shakings, the poetical term for *ḡetab*, means "large richly colored litters which rock freely." *Hawwâr* signifies a camel of the inner desert, inured to thirst, whereas a *ḡûdi* is a camel from districts with plenty of water. A *ḡûdi* is stronger, but a *hawwâr* will endure more fatigue. 9. *Tobb* denotes "come near," "step into the center." 12. The cheeks are clear white and pink and red at the edges. According to the story, Joseph, the son of the patriarch Jacob, was very handsome. 13. *Kamâra* is a story pleasant to hear but fictitious. A *bejfar* is a blacksmith, who beside swinging the ham-

[551]

[232]

[304]

[231]